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First Record of the Spectacled Monarch *Monarcha trivirgatus* for the Northern Territory

The Spectacled Monarch *Monarcha trivirgatus* is found in coastal eastern Australia, New Guinea, and many islands of eastern Indonesia, including Timor (White & Bruce 1986). In far north Queensland it is sedentary, but breeding populations in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales migrate north during the winter (Blakers *et al.* 1984), probably mostly destined for the Trans-Fly region of southern New Guinea (Beehler *et al.* 1986). In Australia it inhabits rainforests and occasionally mangroves (Blakers *et al.* 1984; Boles 1988), while in Timor it occurs in lowland evergreen and semi-deciduous forests, as well as scrub (RN, pers. obs.).

During an avifaunal survey of mining leases on Groote Eylandt, we recorded this species in a patch of coastal vine forest, c 24 km south of Alyangula, on 16 September 1991. Two birds were found: an adult and an immature, the latter recognisable by the lack of black on the face, the lores being whitish-grey, the throat, dark grey (see Slater *et al.* 1986), and the base of the bill being pale yellow. Both birds were present on the following day (RN), but the site was

not re-visited until 5 January 1992, when an immature was sighted (GB). The species was not found, however, during three visits to the site in late March 1992; nor was it ever recorded at the two other vine forest patches surveyed.

These records constitute the first of the Spectacled Monarch for the Northern Territory, and the only known Australian records west of 141°E (Cape York). As the closest known locality to Groote Eylandt is Weipa on Cape York (Blakers *et al.* 1984), it seems likely that the individuals concerned originated from these populations, and were blown westward across the Gulf of Carpentaria. The presence of an immature (albeit independent) bird in September is curious given that Australian populations are purported to breed from October to February (e.g. Boles 1988). Without information on the duration of immature plumage in this species, however, the origin of these birds must remain a mystery.

The above observations were made while conducting a bird survey for Groote Eylandt Mining Company Pty Ltd, under the supervision of Mr Rob Savoury, to whom we extend special thanks.

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